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ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: Deewan Hena ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE : 13/2/21

## 'False narrative': FM rebuts Oppn's crony allegation

NEW DELHI, DHNS : Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday gave a strong rebuttal to the Opposition charge that the Union Budget this year was meant to serve only the rich and ignored the bulk of India's poor.

"It has now become a sort of habit for some in the Opposition to constantly allege in spite of what we are doing for the poor and the steps taken for helping the poor. A false narrative is created to accuse, saying that this government works only for cronies," Sitharaman said, replying to the debate on the Budget



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in the Rajya Sabha.

The finance minister reeled out initiatives the Modi government had tak-

en for the benefit of the poor to buttress her argument.

She said crores who benefited through Mudra loans, Prime Minister Awaas Yojana and other schemes launched during Covid were not rich people but the poor.

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## FM rebuts Oppn's 'Budget for rich' charge

SITHARAMAN, FROM PAGE 1

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More than 1.67 crore houses for the poor were constructed under the PM Awaas Yojana, 2.67 crore households provided electricity connections, 8 crore rural women households were given free cooking gas LPG connections and 9 crore got scholarships, she said and asked: "Is that for the rich?"

While Rs 8 lakh crore worth of transactions were done on the government e-marketplace, Rs 3.6 lakh crore digital transactions happened on the UPI, Sitharaman said, adding

that Rs 2.79 lakh crore was spent on giving free food-grains and Rs 40-crore cash distributed among farmers, women, disabled and elderly.

"Is e-marketplace used by the rich? Is UPI used by rich corporates? Is this government creating UPI, facilitating digital transactions to help some rich cronies, some damaads (sons-in-law). Not at all. It is helping only the poor," she said in an oblique reference to Robert Vadra, son-in-law of Congress President Sonia Gandhi, who has been accused of getting illegal favours during the UPA regime.

During the debate on the

Union Budget, Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and P Chidambaram had launched a furious attack on the government.

While Gandhi had said the government was following a "hum do, hamare do" policy of favouring corporate friends, Chidambaram said the Budget was for the rich, of the rich and by the rich.

The BJP has issued a three-line whip to its Lok Sabha MPs asking them to be present in the House throughout Saturday. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will be replying in the Lok Sabha to the debate on the Budget.